DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 305 739 EA 020 859

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TITLE Job Redesign: Can It Influence Teacher Motivation?
PUB DATE Apr 88
NOTE 22p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the New England Educational Research Organization (Rockport, ME, April 27-29, 1988).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; Incentives; *Job Satisfaction; Self Actualization; Surveys; Teacher Characteristics; *Teacher Motivation; *Teacher Persistence; Teacher Supervision; *Teaching (Occupation); Teaching Conditions
IDENTIFIERS Connecticut (Fairfield County); Job Diagnostic Survey

ABSTRACT

In order to attract people to the teaching profession and to motivate the more capable teachers to remain in the profession, a career structure is needed that will promote excellence, reward commitment, and encourage growth. This study explores the relationships between characteristics of teaching as an occupation and the internal work motivation of teachers. Using a Job Diagnostic Survey based on Hackman's (1979) Job Characteristics Model, the study sought data from a random sample of 425 classroom teachers in Fairfield County, Connecticut, to see if these teachers perceived the presence of the core job dimensions of significance, autonomy, and feedback and to ascertain how teachers viewed the motivating potential of their jobs. Also examined were the overall job satisfaction of teachers, their satisfaction with the quality of supervision, their satisfaction with the degree of challenge in their jobs, their internal work motivation, and the strength of their perceived need for individual growth. Findings, discussed at length, were based on responses from 207 teachers and showed that these classroom teachers saw their profession as intrinsically motivating, fulfilling, and satisfying and as a career to which they could make a life-long commitment. Teacher motivation can be supported by restructuring the job of teaching to allow for a greater degree of challenge and a greater outlet for the need to achieve, to advance, and to become self-actualized. References are included. (TE)

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JOB REDESIGN: CAN IT INFLUENCE TEACHER MOTIVATION?

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April 28,1988

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JOB REDESIGN: CAN IT INFLUENCE TEACHER MOTIVATION

Statement of the Problem

Teacher motivation is a serious problem. Never before have so many teachers expressed dissatisfaction with their career choices. Turk and Litt (1982) cited a 1981 NEA poll in which 37% of teachers expressed dissatisfaction with their positions, 40% indicated an intention to leave the profession before retirement age, and 45% reported that they would most likely not choose teaching as a career if they could start again (p.7).

A related problem identified by Schlechty and Vance (1983) is that teaching is not organized to promote lifetime career commitments. Their research showed that approximately 15% of first and second year teachers and 10% of third year teachers leave the profession annually. Of teachers in the upper 20% of measured verbal ability, only 26% still plan to be teaching at the age of thirty; but 56.6% of those with the lowest measured abilities plan to remain in the profession (p.476).

Schlechty and Vance (1983) found that the features that discourage the best and the brightest young people from entering or remaining in education are as follows: (1) salary limitations, (2) lack of different career stages within the position, and (3) the tendency of schools to work against shared decision making and to discourage problem-centered analytical discussions among adults (p. 478). Feistritzer (1983) stated that the lack of opportunities for further development and substantive salary increases have led many teachers to feel that they have reached a

career plateau and are stranded there. They see no opportunities for growth (p.3).

Given these conditions, school administrators need to understand the factors that influence employee satisfaction and motivation, and adjust accordingly the design of the job of classroom teacher. If these factors are not addressed, people "seeking responsibility, a chance for advancement, a sense of achievement, and recognition for excellence in performance" will continue to look to other professions, leaving the unmotivated to fill our nation's classrooms (Kaiser, 1981, p. 43).

In order to attract people to the teaching profession and to motivate the more capable teachers currently in the profession to make a long-term career commitment, a career structure is needed that will promote excellence, reward commitment, and encourage growth (Schlechty and Vance, 1983). It was the purpose of the present study to explore the relationships between characteristics of the job of teaching and the internal work motivation of teachers.

The study focused on two hypotheses: (1) teachers with high needs for growth and achievement will respond more positively to enriched jobs, will see greater significance in their jobs, and will take greater responsibility for their jobs than will teachers with lower growth and achievement needs; and (2) the presence of the core dimensions of job design will result in greater internal work motivation on the part of teachers.

Theoretical Rationale

The theoretical rationale for the present study came primarily from Hackman's research on work redesign and Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

Hackman and Oldham (1980) stated that a major influence on organizational productivity is the quality of the relationship between employees and their jobs. Their model for work redesign sought to change that relationship by altering specific jobs with the intent of increasing the quality of employees' work experiences.

According to Hackman (1977), work redesign changes behavior. If employees perceive that they have autonomy and personal choice in carrying out their job responsibilities they are more likely to develop positive attitudes and behaviors towards their jobs. Work redesign emphasizes growth and is meant to increase the type of satisfaction that comes when people increase their senses of competence and self-worth.

Hackman (1979) identified five core job dimensions that create three psychological states, which in turn lead to beneficial outcomes.

Job Dimensions		Psychological States
Skill Variety Task Identity Task Significance	→	Meaningfulness
Autonomy	→	Responsibility
Feedback	→	Knowledge of Results

Skill variety, task identity, and task significance are the job dimensions leading to the psychological state of meaningfulness, in which employees see their work as important and worthwhile. Skill variety is defined as the extent to which the job involves different activities that require the use of a variety of skills and abilities. Task identity is the extent to which the job requires the completion of an entire piece of work or one with a visible outcome. And task significance is seen as the extent to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives of others.

The psychological state of responsibility is prompted by the job characteristic of autonomy, or the freedom and independence to determine work schedules and procedures. When autonomy is high, employees are found to view work outcomes as dependent on their own efforts and thus feel personally responsible for the success or failure of their performance.

The state of knowledge of results is fostered by the characteristic of feedback, or the extent to which employees obtain clear and direct information about performance effectiveness.

According to Hackman and Oldham (1980), experiencing all three psychological states can lead to positive personal and work outcomes, including internal work motivation, job satisfaction, high quality performance, and the positive feelings that occur with knowledge of effective performance.

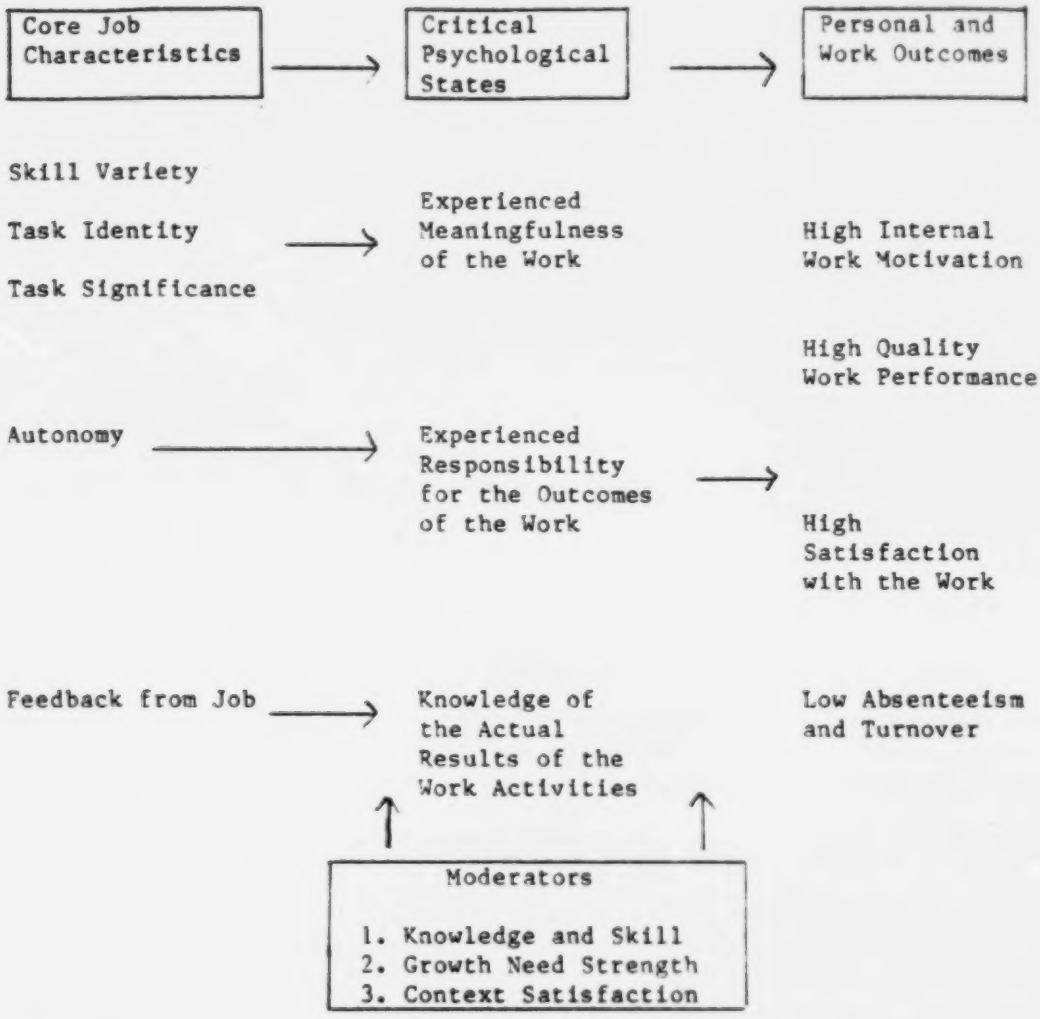

Figure 1. Job Characteristics Model. Note. From "Work Design" by J. R. Hackman, in Motivation and Work Behavior (p. 407) by R. M. Steers and L. W Porter (Eds.), 1979, New York: Mc-Graw Hill; and Work Redesign (p. 83) by J. R. Hackman and G. R. Oldham, 1980, Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Hackman and Oldham (1980) identified three moderating factors that influence the way different people will respond to the same job. The first of these is knowledge and skill. People who are

not sufficiently competent to complete a particular task will experience frustration because the job is important and they cannot do it well.

A second moderating factor is the growth need strength of the individual employee. The psychological needs of employees are critical in determining a person's response to an enriched job. A person with strong needs for achievement, challenge, and growth will have a high internal motivation for performing well in a complex, challenging job. This person will experience the psychological states more intensely and will respond to them more positively than will the person with low growth needs.

The third moderating factor identified by Hackman and Oldham is satisfaction with the job context. The authors stated that satisfaction with such factors as salary, security and working conditions affects a person's willingness to participate in job enrichment opportunities.

The basis for much of Hackman's research on work redesign can be found in Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

Herzberg (1966) identified the following as criteria for meaningful work: (1) achievement opportunities, (2) recognition for achievement, (3) increased responsibility, (4) opportunity for growth, and (5) opportunity to advance to higher level tasks.

Herzberg's theory (1976) suggested that jobs be enriched to allow for effective utilization of employees and for greater intrinsic motivation on the part of employees. Job enrichment as defined by Herzberg focuses on the job itself as a means of fulfilling individual motivational needs. The jobs are designed

to maximize the opportunities for personal growth at work. By enriching jobs, employees will be motivated to perform well on their own initiative.

Herzberg (1966) defined motivation seekers as those people who are motivated by the nature of the task, derive great satisfaction from accomplishment; are able to enjoy work, have positive feelings towards work and towards life in general, profit professionally from experience, and may be overachievers. He recognized, as did Hackman, that not all employees are motivation seekers and, therefore, not all employees want enriched jobs. Job enrichment should be viewed as an opportunity, not as a demand.

Herzberg (1959) stated that the successful supervisor is often instrumental in restructuring work so that employees can realize their needs for creative achievement. And he kept these needs in mind when he outlined his principles of job enrichment, principles very similar to those illustrated in Hackman's Job Characteristics Model: (1) increased accountability of employee for her/his own work, (2) assignment of a complete, natural unit of work to an employee, (3) additional freedom and authority granted to employees to carry out job, (4) periodic feedback given directly to employee, (5) introduction of new and more challenging tasks, and (6) enablement of workers to become expert in a particular area of their jobs (1976, p.131).

Methodology

The present study examined the dimensions of the job of teaching to determine whether or not they meet the motivational needs of teachers. Analysis of these dimensions was based on the

Job Characteristics Model (Hackman, 1979). The job of teaching was analyzed to see if teachers perceived the presence of the core job dimensions of significance, autonomy, and feedback, and how teachers viewed the motivating potential of their jobs. Also examined were the overall job satisfaction of teachers, their satisfaction with the quality of supervision, their satisfaction with the degree of challenge in their jobs, their internal work motivation, and their individual growth need strength.

The sample consisted of 425 classroom teachers randomly selected from among the 8484 public elementary and secondary school teachers in the twenty-four districts of Fairfield County, Connecticut. Completed questionnaires were returned by 207 of those contacted. The respondent group compared favorably to the total population with respect to gender, grade level, and experience.

Materials and Procedures

The Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS), developed by Hackman and Oldham to determine the presence of the core dimensions of job design and their relationships to internal work motivation, was mailed to all members of the sample. This instrument measures the five core dimensions of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback from the job itself. In addition, measures are provided for two additional characteristics, feedback from other people and dealings or workings with other people. The JDS also measures each of the three psychological states identified in Hackman's theory, and the affective reactions people obtain from performing the job. These

include general satisfaction with the work, internal motivation factors inherent in the work, and specific reactions to such factors as supervision, opportunities for growth, job security and salary. Finally, the JDS addresses the issue of individual growth need strength, a factor which research indicates will affect how positively an employee will respond to a job which is found to have high motivating potential (Hackman and Oldham, 1974).

The psychometric characteristics of the JDS have been found to be satisfactory and the scores derived from the instrument have been shown to have substantive validity (Hackman and Oldham, 1974). The variables measured by the JDS have been found to relate to each other and to the external criterion variables as predicted by the Job Characteristics Theory. Specifically, the job dimensions have been found to relate positively to the critical psychological states and to the personal and work outcomes measured by the instrument. Also, the relationships between job dimensions and the other variables have been found to be stronger for individuals with high growth needs than for those with lower growth needs (pp. 26-27).

Along with the JDS, each member of the sample was asked to complete a demographic information sheet.

Data Analysis

Responses to the Job Diagnostic Survey were tabulated along the lines suggested by Hackman and Oldham. Scores were compiled for each of the job characteristics and for the affective outcomes which result from the perceived psychological states. Scores were also compiled for context satisfactions such as satisfaction with

job security, compensation, co-workers, and supervision; and for individual growth need strength. A Motivating Potential Score, based on the scores for the core job characteristics, was calculated as an indication of the extent to which respondents saw their jobs as having the potential to be motivating. All scores were compared to national norms and to the norms for specific job families to see how the job of teaching compares with others in the categories measured by the survey. Finally, the appropriate analyses of variance were calculated to see if significant differences existed in the responses of male and female respondents, elementary, middle, and secondary level respondents, respondents in high, average, and low socio-economic districts, and respondents holding and not holding enriched jobs.

Findings

The Job Diagnostic Survey yielded some very interesting data. In comparison to national norm groups, the Motivating Potential Scores and the job significance scores for teachers were high, indicating that teaching can be a very meaningful and fulfilling career and that teachers saw their jobs as having a meaningful impact on the lives of others.

Scores for autonomy were also relatively high, indicating that teachers experience a feeling of responsibility towards their jobs, and have the freedom to set their own goals, determine their own curricula and methodologies, and select their own instructional materials. However, the high autonomy scores were accompanied by considerably lower scores for feedback from colleagues and supervisors, and for the quality of supervision,

indicating that knowledge of results of teachers' efforts is sometimes lacking.

Scores for job satisfaction and for work motivation were considerably higher for teachers than for workers in other occupations. The study found that teachers in Fairfield County, Connecticut had high growth needs and that those holding enriched jobs were far more satisfied with the challenges of their jobs than were those teachers not holding enriched jobs. It was also found that teachers in the sample having high growth needs were significantly less satisfied with their jobs than were teachers with low growth needs.

Female teachers saw greater significance in their jobs than did male teachers. They were also more satisfied with the level of feedback and the quality of supervision, had a greater degree of overall job satisfaction, and were more satisfied with the challenges of the job.

Elementary school teachers saw greater significance in their jobs than did either middle/junior high school teachers or senior high school teachers. This could be related to female-male differences regarding job significance since 76% of the elementary school teachers in the sample were female.

Teachers in low socio-economic districts were significantly less satisfied with the challenges of their jobs than their colleagues in both high and average socio-economic districts. And teachers holding enriched jobs were far more satisfied with the level of challenge in their jobs than were those teachers not holding enriched jobs.

Both hypotheses explored in this study have been supported. It was found that for teachers in the sample, those with high needs for growth and achievement saw greater meaning in their jobs and assumed greater responsibility for their jobs than did those with low growth needs. To test this hypothesis the sample was divided into two groups based on the mean score for individual needs. Teachers with high growth needs were defined as those scoring more than one-half standard deviation above the mean, and those with low growth needs were defined as those scoring more than one-half standard deviation below the mean. Analysis of variance was used to compare the two groups with respect to Job Meaningfulness (significance score) and Job Responsibility (autonomy score). In both cases, statistically significant differences were found ($p < .05$); however, the amount of variance accounted for in each instance was small ($\sigma^2 = 6.97; 4.41$).

It was also found that those teachers who perceived a high degree of presence of the core job dimensions were more internally motivated than were those who did not see their presence. The sample was divided into two groups based on Motivating Potential Scores. Those scoring higher than one-half standard deviation above the sample mean were considered to be the group which saw their jobs as having high motivating potential, based on perceived presence of the core job dimensions. Those scoring lower than one-half standard deviation below the mean were considered to be in the group which saw their jobs as having low motivating potential, based on perceived absence of the core job dimensions. Comparisons between the groups were made for their internal work

motivation scores.

A statistically significant difference was found, indicating that those who perceive the presence of the core dimensions of job design were more internally motivated to perform well on the job. A moderate amount of variance was accounted for in the analysis (σ^2 = 17.31).

Discussion

The results of this study have many implications for educators. Compared to the national norms for persons with graduate degrees, professional/technical workers, and service workers, the Motivating Potential Score for teachers in the sample was quite high. This indicates that, in theory, these classroom teachers saw their profession as intrinsically motivating, fulfilling, and satisfying, and as a career to which they could make a life-long commitment.

J.R. Hackman's Job Characteristic Model of Work Motivation (1979) identified three critical psychological states, the presence of which lead to greater internal work motivation. The psychological state of experienced meaningfulness of a job is brought about when workers see their roles as being significant. According to the results of the present study, the teachers in the sample saw greater significance in their jobs than did their counterparts in other careers.

The psychological state of experienced responsibility for one's work is created by the job characteristic of autonomy. The results of the present study indicated that teachers in the sample perceived their roles as being more autonomous than did those

workers in the national norm groups.

The third psychological state, that of knowledge of results of one's work, is brought about by the quality of feedback one gets from the job itself, from supervisors and peers, and from the overall quality of supervision that one receives. While teachers in the present study seemed satisfied with the feedback received from the work itself, there was considerably less satisfaction with the other two variables. In comparing the question of feedback from peers and supervisors, present study teachers scored lower than the national norm group of workers with graduate degrees; virtually the same as the norm group of professional and technical workers; and higher than the group of service workers. In dealing with the quality of supervision, the mean for the present study group was lower than the mean for all of the national norm groups used for comparison in this study. It is important to note that of all the variables examined in the present study, only in the areas of feedback from supervisors and peers and quality of supervision did present study teachers exhibit lower mean scores than the three national norm groups with which they have been compared. Teachers in the present study were relatively satisfied with their perceived work autonomy; but they were considerably less satisfied with both the quality of feedback from important agents in their work lives and with the overall quality of supervision. The implication is that at a time when strong administrative leadership has become the demand of the effective school movement, laissez-faire leadership seems to be the prevalent mode among the study sample.

Hackman's Job Characteristic Model illustrates the relationship between the experienced critical psychological states and personal and work outcomes such as internal work motivation, job satisfaction and turnover and absenteeism. The results of the present study indicated that in general, teachers were more internally motivated and more satisfied with their jobs than were people in other professions. However, examination of the data revealed that teachers with high growth and achievement needs are less satisfied with their jobs than were their counterparts with lower growth needs. Comments from respondents pinpointed the lack of challenge as one major reason for this discrepancy. One respondent, who left teaching in March, 1985, explained that "while I have no negative experiences to relay, no 'horror stories,' I can say that I want new challenges. I was simply tired of the routine and the lack of intellectual stimulation." Another commented that "after a certain point a classroom teacher is likely to become inefficient or less efficient. A lot of hard work and dedication for little salary compels an effective teacher to realize that becoming sedentary in the classroom is self-destructive. Unfortunately, there are few alternatives outside the classroom in education." And a third person explained, "I've accomplished all that I set out to accomplish when I first entered teaching. In spite of the fact that I've received much recognition as a result of my success, the degree of satisfaction and fulfillment has diminished greatly." And many respondents echo the sentiments found in the comment, "I want to do something more. I'm tired of the same surroundings and find little

challenge right now."

The answer may very well lie with the development of a job enrichment model for classroom teachers. The fourteen people in the sample who indicated that they held enriched jobs were significantly more satisfied with the challenges presented by their jobs than were the 193 respondents not holding enriched jobs. People with high needs for growth and achievement, currently less satisfied with classroom teaching jobs than those with lower growth needs, may well respond to the challenges of an enriched role and may be encouraged to remain committed to their roles as classroom teachers for an extended period of time.

Recommendations

Hackman (1977) and Herzberg (1976) both stated that the concept of work redesign was based on the idea that the very nature and characteristics of the work itself influences the internal work motivation of employees. Of particular importance are the job characteristics of task variety, job significance, employee autonomy, and clear and direct feedback about the effectiveness of employee performance. This research was substantiated by the findings of the present study. Survey results showed that teachers in the sample who perceived a high degree of presence of the core job characteristics were more motivated than those teachers who perceived their presence to a lesser degree.

Herzberg (1976) identified several criteria for meaningful work. These include opportunities for growth and achievement; recognition for achievements; increased responsibility for one's

own job; and opportunities to advance to higher level tasks. What is needed in education is the development of a job enrichment model for classroom teachers that would meet these criteria and thus provide adequate opportunities for challenge and advancement to satisfy the achievement motive of those with high growth needs.

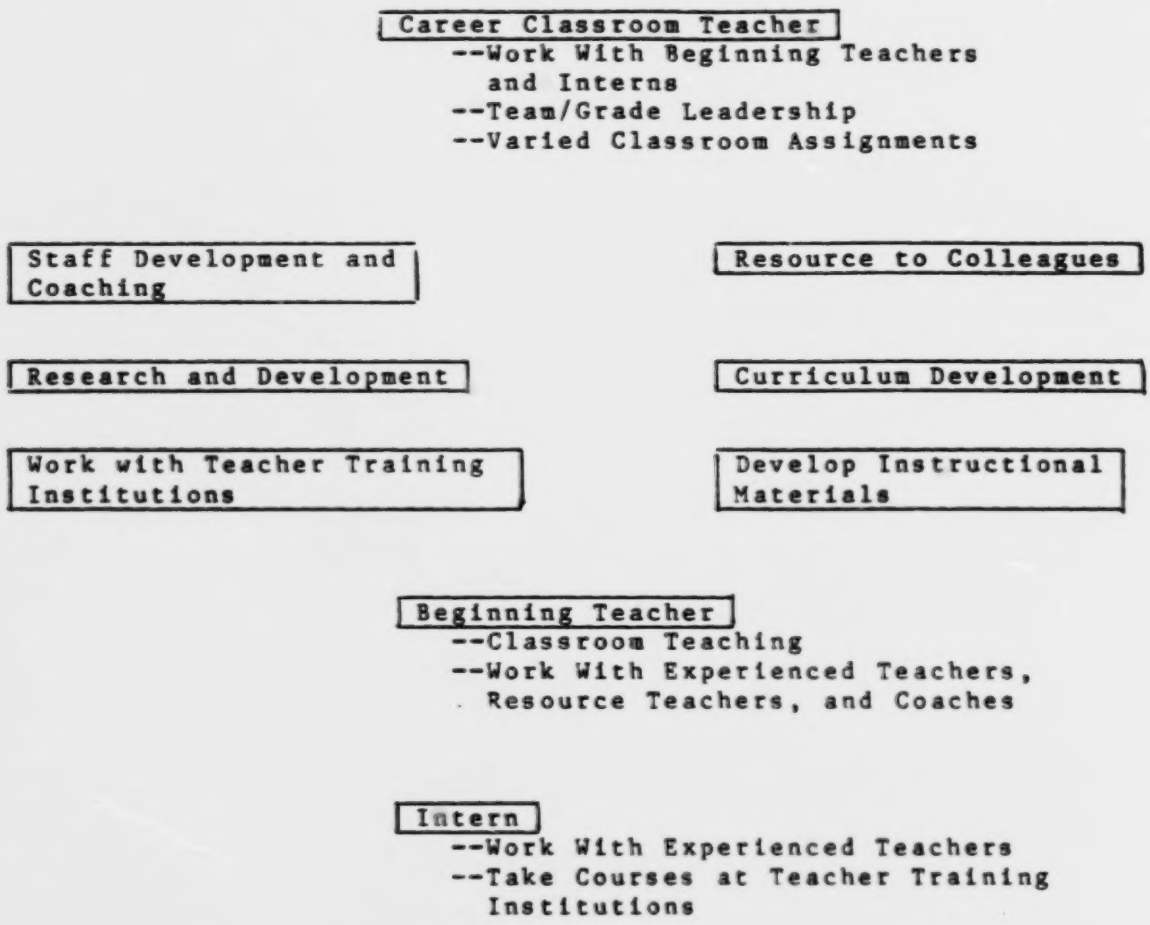

Figure 2. Job Enrichment in Education.

The career path for a classroom teacher need not include a move to administration or to an alternate career in order to advance. The development of a team approach to teaching or a

differentiated staffing pattern can allow for released time for master teachers to pursue enriching experiences. Opportunities should be made available as part of the regular contract day and year for teachers to do curriculum development, staff development and classroom coaching, development of instructional materials, or research on new methodologies. And for those who are career classroom teachers with no desire for varied roles, enrichment opportunities can be made available right within the classroom. Classroom teachers can act as resource teachers for colleagues and for new teachers. They can be encouraged to try new methods and materials in their classes, to try to teach new subjects or new grade levels or special populations. Schools can work together with teacher training institutions to become laboratory school settings. Those studying to be teachers can work hand-in-hand in the classroom with experienced teachers, and experienced teachers can be provided with the opportunity to attend university classes with their trainees to learn new methods and see what new research has been discovered.

It is imperative that the achievement motive of growth oriented teachers be supported. This can be done by restructuring the job of classroom teacher to allow for a greater degree of challenge and a greater outlet for the need to achieve, the need to advance, and the need to become self-actualized. With the development of an effective job enrichment model for classroom teachers, teachers with high growth and achievement needs will not have to look to other professions to satisfy those needs.

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